

Message Text

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ACTION OPR-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CU-02 AID-05 SSO-00 L-03

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O 291437Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1113

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 1824

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: ASCH PFOR JO US

SUBJECT: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL- RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

1. ON MARCH 17 THE JORDANIAN LOCAL COURT MET TO CONSIDER AGAIN CURRENT CASE. JUDGE AT THAT TIME WAS APPRISED OF LEASE CONDITIONS REQUIRING ARBITRATION OF DISPUTES BY HEAD OF USAID MISSION AND WAS ASKED TO CONSIDER COURT JURISDICTION IN LIGHT OF THIS FACT. JUDGE EXPECTS RENDER HIS DECISION MARCH 30.

2. IN MEANTIME AS RESULTS OF AMBASSADORS DISCUSSION WITH KING HUSSEIN EARLIER COURT CHIEF SHARAF WAS TOLD TO FOLLOW UP. HE TOLD US KING DOES NOT FEEL THE LAND TRANSFER FROM ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB ADJACENT TO CURENT SCHOOL GROUNDS IS FEASIBLE GIVEN HIS PAST COMMITEMENTS TO SUPPORT CLUB. A DIFFERENT PLOT OF GROUND WILL BE LOOKED AT.

3. ON MARCH 28 AMBASSSDOR TALKED TO PRIME MINISTER IN VIEW OF PENDING COURT CASE AND REPORTED ON HIS TALK WITH KING AND SHARAF AND POINT OUT IMPENDING COURT DECISION ON JURISDICTION.

4. AT ONE POINT MEETING JOINED BY MINSTATE:MINED ABDEL SALAM JALAI WHO CONTINUES TO BE EXTREMELY CONFIDENTIAL

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HELPFUL. END RESULT OF MEET WAS THAT:

A) PM PERSONNALLY ORDER USE OF PROPERTY NOW IN HANDS OF ARMY FAVORALY LOCATED IN POTENTIAL RESIDENTIAL AREA FOR USE IN TRADE WITH PRESENT LANDLORDS) TRADE WOULD BE EQUAL VALUE IN TERMS OF CURRENT LAND APPRIASAL.

B) ARMY THEM POSSIBLY WOULD BECOME SCHOOL LANDLORD, A NOT UNHAPPY RESULT GIVEN EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH ARMY ITS RELATIVELY LACK OF BUREACRACTIC FUDDLE AND ITS STRONG INTEREST IN PROGRAMS WHICH SCHOOL HELPS TO SUPPORT.

C) PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WOULD TALK TO LEADING MEMBER OF ASFOUR FAMILY ABOUT LAND TRADE AND HOLDING OFF COURT CASE.

D) PRIME MINISTER WILL TALK TO OUR SCHOOL LAWYER WHO BELIEVS THAT A DISCREET WORD FROM GOVERNMENT ON OOD FAITH OF SCHOOL IN DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE WILL LEAD JUDGE TO DEDICE IN SCHOOLS FAVOR IN JURISDICTION ISSUE. LAWYER WOULD ALSO CONTACT PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE LEGAL ADVISOR TO APPRIASE HIM OF THIS FACT.

4.LATER IN DAY AMBASSADOR SAW KING AND THANKED HIM FOR HIS HELP. KING SAID THAT HE FELT LAND TRANSFER WAS BEST SOUTION, HE ORDER PRIME MINISTER TO GO AHEAD (PRESUMABLY WITH ARMY LAND)AND THAT WE COULD REST ASSURED THAT SCHOOL WOULD NOT BE SHUT DOWN BY BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM US SINCE IT WAS BOTH IN JORDANS AND US INTEREST TO KEEP IT OPEN AND FUNCTIONING.

5. PRIME MINISTER LATER SUMMONED OUR SCHOOL LAWYER TO DISCUSS CASE. PRIME MINISTER INDICATED HE HAD JUST DISCUSSED MATTER WITH ASFOUR FAMILY AND OBTAINED THEIR GREEMENT TO REQUEST CONFIDENTIAL

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ADJOURNMENT OF COURT CASE SINE DIE AND WOULD SSURE THAT THEY CARRIED OUT THAT PROMISE. PRIME MINISTER ALSO MENTIONED TO LAWYER HE STILL IS CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY OF RE-NEGOTIATING OF PRESENT RENTAL CONTRACT INVOLVING REASONABLE RENT INCREASE BETWEEN EMBASSY AND LANDLORD AS ALTERNATIVE TO ABOVE MENTIONED LAND EXCHANGE IDEA. LAWYER MADE NO COMMITMENTS. PRIME MINISTER REQUESTED TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH EMBASSY AFTER ADJOURNMENT OBTAINED REGARDING COURT CASE.

6. COMMENT: KINGS INVOLVEMENT SEEMS TO HAVE GALVANIZED GOJ FINALLY TO BEGIN TO MOVE ON THIS ISSUE.WE SUSPECT ASFOUR FAMILY IS RESISTING IDEA OF LAND EXCHANGE AND THAT PRIME MINISTER IS CAUGHT SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE: HENCE HIS DESIRE TO MENTION RE-NEGOTIATIONS AS ALTERNATIVE. WE BELIEVE HOWEVER THAT LAND EXCHANGE IS STILL AN ACTIVE POSSIBILITY PARTICULARLY SINCE ASFOUR FAMILY WILL PROBABLY NOT BE SATISFIED WITH A REASONBLE RENTAL INCREASE. PICKERING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTES, SCHOOLS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 29-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977AMMAN01824
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770107-0550
Format: TEL
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770313/aaaaakxd.tel
Line Count: 115
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d252a1b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION OPR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2970751
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL- RECENT DEVELOPMENTS
TAGS: ASCH, PFOR, JO, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d252a1b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009